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THE POET AS PRINTER *by* ANDREW HOYEM

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# *The Book Club of California Quarterly News-Letter*

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## THE POET AS PRINTER

*by Andrew Hoyem\**

IN the year I was born, 1935, a dedicated eccentric, modernist and amateur of printing named Wilder Bentley delivered a parcel of advice from *The Printer to the Poet*. It contained a set of ideals for the relationship between the man who is a medium and the men who multiply his messages. Basically, he was urging on the poet an intelligent understanding of the processes of printing, while commending the printer to functionalism, to a typography that at its best is reticent, not assertive. Bentley wrapped up his suggestions in a memorable statement: "Printing is not necessarily an 'art preservative of the arts' at all, but it may be and in its best sense is *a craft concealed by the art of poetry*." Thirty-five years later I find this notion appealing to the mystery which surrounds both craft and art and to their admixture in each of these endeavors. Certainly this must be why I heard their calling almost simultaneously and sensed that neither would impinge upon the other. Poetry and printing have become compatible occupations for my life. Of a consequence, my curiosity was aroused over the manner in which others had pursued the two activities in their lives. I found a variety of resolution whose history can only be told in haphazardly chronological fashion.

When Wilder Bentley was a student of Porter Garnett at the Laboratory Press in Pittsburgh, the school was visited by the dean of American printers. Bruce Rogers, being shown through the print-

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ing office, noticed on its wall a framed inscription from Tu Fu, the Chinese poet-philosopher. The quotation read, "Who understands distinction? Who really cares for art?" Rogers turned to his august host and said, "Too few Mr. Garnett, too few!"

If too few poets have succumbed to the lure of our siren print, so many more printers have satisfied vanity by setting up their own verse that we might wish the bed and platen of the printing press had been the rocks of Scylla crushing poetasters instead of sailors. Benjamin Franklin displayed uncommon good sense in dealing with this temptation. Indentured in 1718 to his older brother James as an apprentice printer, he was allowed to practice composition on his own poems. The first misfortune, called "The Lighthouse Tragedy" was peddled by the youngster with some success, being based on a current event. Ben's father ridiculed his performance, telling him the discouraging truth that verse-makers are generally beggars. Franklin admitted his efforts were "wretched stuff, in the Grub-street-ballad style," and gave up the vice. While the literary worth of Franklin's first products as author and printer is doubtful, their market value would be quickly established if copies could ever be found. To date none is known.

Dozens of other American printers were less modest when, in 1875, they subscribed themselves to a "mug book" published in Cincinnati. The editor, publisher and printer, one Oscar W. Harpel, advertised his *Poets and Poetry of Printerdom* as "A collection of original selected and fugitive lyrics written by persons connected with printing." Horace Greeley, first president of the New York Typographical Union, led off the 400 page compendium with an offering entitled, "One Thousand Ems," which began, "Let the type click! / Electric key-note of the art divine." Better had these fugitives remained at large.

Not all forays of printers into the realm of poetry were so regrettable. From the earliest days in the history of printing her craftsmen have been tempted to compose words as they composed type in their sticks. The mottos of printers incorporated into their devices or placed along with their names at the end of books were often couplets of verse adopted for an enigmatic association of their labors with the muses.

A delightful invention, typical of the frivolity indulged by printers, was produced on the ice of the Thames, February 5, 1814, by an un-

known artisan. The printing probably occurred during one of the fairs held when the river was frozen over. This tiny broadside reads:

*The season cold  
You now behold!  
A sight that's very rare,  
All in a trice  
Upon the ICE,  
Just like a russian fair.*

*The ice is firm which well you know,  
For PRINTING on it now we show;  
Near to swan stairs, for there you'll find,  
Impressions neat and to your mind.*

The author appended a footnote in his own hand. "I had this card printed on the River Thames—near to Blackfriars Bridge and walked to the Surrey side and back—the next day the frost suddenly broke up."

Another anonymous author paid his debt to the trade in 1842 with a miniature pamphlet of 44 pages, *The Poetry of Printing*, signing himself humbly and simply, a Votary. His lines are dedicated to his employer, the Boston typefounder Samuel N. Dickinson. They recount the mechanics of letter founding, book printing, the rotary press and embossing, ending with a fervent plea:

*And ye whose hearts ne'er own the tender thought,  
Who view alike the saint and worthless sot,  
With nerve of steel and adamant heart,  
Wear life away—but bless the printers' art!*

Enough for the printer who occasionally turns to the poem for solace, diversion or a lark. Our concern is with the poets and the manner of their involvement with printing. First we must consider those who may have never sullied their hands with ink but whose knowledge of the craft belies the improbability of their intimacy. A number of poets have taken up the theme of printing and used its jargon.

Arnold de Bergel was a corrector of the press in Mainz in 1541 when he wrote a poem of 456 heroic verses on the origin of printing.



It was of sufficient interest to have been reprinted five times by the nineteenth century. The most vital period of printing was its first hundred years which could have provided Bergellanus, as was his Latin pen-name, with sufficient material for a work of these epic proportions.

A poem which also required a glossary of technical terms was written in Latin by Claude-Louis Thiboust in 1718. His son translated this celebration of printing into French in 1754 and issued the book with quaint engravings showing the interior of a printing office.

The small boy who fits into the picture of any press was commiserated in a collection of verse published in 1783. "The Miseries of an Apprentice Printer" was just one of the many facetious complaints entered on behalf of young trainees in the various trades of Paris.

Our own pumpkin-poet, James Whitcomb Riley, took his turn at the subject, in admiration of a press that issued, I'm embarrassed to say, the first book I acquired with any pretention to its printing:

*Where smooth the Roycroft presses grind  
Their virgin hand wrought reams of snow  
To russet chamois, silken-lined,  
Unrivalled volumes—marked as low  
As two dollars per copy—no  
Pelf-hanging parsimony yet  
May hold the ducats I let go  
For Aucassin and Nicolette.*

Quite the opposite is the refreshing view of Richard Aldington in a piece he published in *The Egoist* in November, 1916. Aldington was soon to be the estranged husband of Hilda Doolittle, better known as the poet H.D., both were involved in the literary politics of the Imagists then trying to break into print, and to further sour him on worldly squabbles, he was serving with the British Army in World War I. The following should be shoved under the noses of those who breathe too heavily over fine printing.

*Print,  
Dirty black marks  
Ruining the paper,  
Masses of squirming little insects,*

*What do I care  
Though it was Aldus himself made you  
In the year of God 1513?*

*A great flight of pigeons across the sun  
Make the light of my window  
Twinkle and flash;  
The roses in the blue patterned jug  
Are austere and indifferent;  
The trees are not worried with learning.*

*Let us loaf;  
Leave Aldus and his kind on the shelf,  
Soothe our eyes and brains  
In sunlight and idleness.*

Recently there appeared in the *New Yorker* a take-off on the colophon of a book published by Michael Joseph in London. The colophon reads, "Set and printed in Great Britain by Tonbridge Printers Ltd., Peach Hall Works, Tonbridge, in Times nine on ten point, on paper made by John Dickinson at Croxley, and bound by James Burn at Esher." John Updike's amusing rhyme is entitled "Song in American Type."

*Ah, to be set and printed in  
Great Britain now that Tonbridge Prin-  
ters, Limited, employ old John  
Dickinson, at Croxley. On*

*his pages in Times nine-on-ten-  
point type impressed, and, lastly, when  
at Peach Hall Works the job is done,  
James Burn at Esher's job's begun.*

*Hey nonny nonny nonny,  
Hey nonny nonny nay!*

*Tonbridge! Croxley! Esher! Ah,  
is there in America  
a tome contrived in such sweet towns?  
No. English, English are the downs  
where Jim Burn, honest craftsman, winds*



*beneath his load of reams he binds  
the sheets that once John Dickinson  
squeezed flat from British pulp.*

*Hey nonny nonny nonny, etc.*

A second category of poets' involvement with the making of books is aptly introduced by a statement of Desmond Flower. "Printing is a curious and perhaps unsatisfactory hybrid between a profession and an art; the men who have caught the sense of it most successfully have been intelligent people who could see it whole—scholar-printer-publisher." Robert Estienne was one of these, a man of multiple talents. Though he is remembered primarily as a sixteenth century printer he did write poetry of no disservice to his reputation.

Edward Moxon became a London publisher in 1830 because of his love for poetry. Altruistic ventures usually meet with an early death. Moxon lived on for eighteen years, maintaining a sound business in the publishing of poetry. His list included among its living authors Leigh Hunt, Tennyson, Wordsworth, Elizabeth Barrett Browning. He was his own reader of manuscripts and was known for his cordial but very businesslike relations with authors. In spite of the fact he made them share his losses, poets liked to have his name on their title-pages, perhaps not only for the honor of the publishing house but also for his clear, simple typography. An obituary for Moxon called him the Dodsley of his day while granting that he wrote better verse than other poet-publishers.

A parallel in our own time might be the picaresque poet and inveterate letter writer Jonathan Williams, whose Jargon Books has been responsible for the publication of several important contemporaries. From the mid-1950s through the early 1960s the then avant garde was not so acceptable to the major publishers as it is now and Williams was an outlet for Charles Olson, Robert Duncan and Robert Creeley, among others. Though he rarely sees the inside of a composing room, Williams' Bauhaus training at the Chicago Art Institute has led him to work closely with numerous printers over the years, resulting in an impressive array of handsomely designed books.

Among the ancient obligations of the poet is his duty to name things, to have an effect upon the growth of his language. When a poet can exercise the power of print, his ability to invent and work



change on his mother tongue is greatly enhanced. William Caxton, the first English printer, is credited with altering the course of our language. Caxton was a retired wool merchant who liked to translate French romances for his friends. He chose to publish his version of Raoul Lefèvre's chivalrous *Recueil des histoires de Troye* and set about to learn the craft of printing in 1476. Of the 90 books issued by Caxton, 20 were his translations. In his own use of the language and that of the other books selected, Caxton favored the introduction of Latin and French words. He preferred fancified varieties of words to the plainness of home-grown stock. Hence, he refused to print *Piers Plowman*, the Middle English classic, because he felt it was too rough hewn. This no doubt reflected the fashion of the time in that southern, or London, English was winning out over the northern dialect. Caxton is not entirely responsible for the fact that we cannot today read the *Pearl* or *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* without the benefit of translation while we are able to make some sense of Chaucer, but he did control the media and he did edit according to his taste. Thomas Mallory's *Le Mort d'Arthur* was amended by Caxton in 1485 to supplant its Old English alliteration with a more Latinate form. What had been simple and direct became ornate. An example of the transformation may be taken in the words hardy and cordial. Prior to Caxton they were synonymous. The latter was chosen and the former reappeared with a different meaning.

It is too soon to measure the effect of Robert Bridges on the language, but here is another case of a poet who manipulated the King's English and innovated typographically to coerce speech and writing. Bridges founded the Society for Pure English in 1913, the same year he was named Poet Laureate. According to its Secretary, the Society resulted from "a leisurely afternoon in congenial company, deploring the taste of one's contemporaries and the evils of the age one lives in." All were flabbergasted when they realized Bridges was serious about forming a committee, composing a manifesto, and enrolling members. He chose the word "pure" in the name for subtle irony against the purists of the academies. "Language for him was a vital medium, change for the sake of clarity and beauty was to be encouraged. Foreign words were not to be discarded for derivations from native sources but should be assimilated in shapes and sounds in harmony with the genius of the language into which they had been borrowed." The Oxford University Press encouraged the

movement and placed itself at the disposal of the Society. The Clarendon Press cooperated when Bridges came to devise a phonetic script. Most characters were chosen from an Anglo-Saxon font in the cases but a few were designed by Bridges and cast for him. Later, Stanley Morison recreated the set of special characters for the English Monotype Italic face Blado and these were used for the printing of Bridges' essay *A Critical Introduction to Keats*. These new symbols are surprisingly easy to read. One adapts after only a page or two to recognize the differentiated pronunciation as it is indicated. I found myself hoping his efforts against our clumsy spelling were not in vain. Bridges' typographical interests took him down another less well lighted alley. In the Daniel Press edition of his poems he insisted on the use of Gothic type in hopes of slowing the reader by impaired legibility. This is a strange notion coming from a man whose theory of prosody incorporated the belief that poetry should follow rules of natural speech and that the reader should be aware of stresses rather than syllabic count.

Third in our survey come the poets who were noted practitioners of printing. Since that distant day when the oral tradition of poetry was supplanted by the written word, poets have been concerned with the graphic presentation of their works. The Viking poet-magician was proud purveyor of the runes. Their interpretation and proper shaping in stone were his function and source of power. Oriental poet-calligraphers transmitted far more than signals for the voice in their pictorial characters. The beauty of each brush stroke was weighed long after the moment of truth and meanings of these improvisations on standard pictograms could only be guessed. Some were recaptured in woodcuts and here, I suppose, our tradition began. When Petrarch and Michelangelo lived, European poets were masters of calligraphy. Their fine and legible hands served as models for types in use today. Contemporary poets, as products of the industrial revolution, have taken up the typewriter for the machine of their compositions. Its convenience of spacing and precise placement of letters and words on the page has given rise to a whole set of conventions in poetic form. This prosody has limitations unknown to the poet who is not familiar with the flexibility of moveable type, the typewriter being a much more rigid instrument. The Concrete Poetry movement, following in the tradition of poems shaped as angel wings by George Herbert or as a necktie by Appollinaire,



has sent young poets to learn the tools of the trade once again. The new poetry is still searching for conventions to score its music. Printer-poets are currently at work on typographic solutions.

It was this very quest that involved Nancy Cunard in the making of books. Daughter of the wealthy shipping family and protege of George Moore, she had the taste and practical ability to manage her Hours Press for four years in France with literary success and modest financial return. Her books balanced, in all usages of the term. Few private presses audit so well. Nancy Cunard was a credible poet in her own right. Leonard and Virginia Woolf published her *Parallax* in 1925 at their Hogarth Press, three years before the founding of her own. With the help of a retired French printer, she and the negro jazz musician, Henry Crowder, handset type and printed on an enormous Belgian handpress the first work of Samuel Beckett, cantos of Ezra Pound, and other pieces of Moore, Arthur Symons, Robert Graves, Roy Campbell and Havelock Ellis. Artists of the period such as Yves Tanguy and Man Ray were enlisted for covers. Despite the inevitable ink under her finger-nails, Nancy Cunard was a lady of fashion as well, painted by Kokoschka, sculptured by Brancusi, photographed by Cecil Beaton. When she came to print Bob Brown's poems the utmost ingenuity was required of her. Brown was one of the early innovators, along with Cummings, the Dadaists and Surrealists, in the visual poem. The Hours Press edition of his *Words* is signal among modern books of poetry. One of the Hours presses was still in operation when I visited the shop of Guy Levis Mano in Paris ten years ago. He may have used it to print Antonin Artaud's *Letters from Rodez*, which would have been fitting for a press used to the latest in literature.

Women were very active in the poets' presses of the expatriate period. The poetess Laura Riding co-founded the Seizin Press with Robert Graves in 1928, the same year the Hours Press began. They operated at Hammersmith and Majorca for eight years. One of their books was written by the queen of expatriates, Gertrude Stein. A year earlier in Paris, the poet Harry Crosby and his wife Caresse had started the Black Sun Press with Pound, Joyce, D. H. Lawrence and Archibald MacLeish among its authors. The first edition of Hart Crane's most ambitious work, *The Bridge*, was published by them. Caresse Crosby was an uninhibited women's liberator credited with the invention of the brassière. In the early 1940s she commissioned



a small press in New York to print for Black Sun a book by Paul Eluard with drawings by Max Ernst. This was the Gemor Press, concocted as a self-help alternative to unresponsive publishers for the writings of Anaïs Nin and as therapy for her unemployed consort, the Peruvian poet Gonzalo. Her diary has an engaging story of the press. Its beginnings were typical of many another romantic venture in the printing of literature. She tells how they had to borrow money for second-hand equipment from the book dealer Frances Steloff and a book from the public library on how to print. After days of hunting for a loft, she found the perfect location in an attic studio with a skylight on MacDougal Street in Greenwich Village. "Everywhere was the casual, artistic life," wrote Anaïs. A foot-treadle press and a minimum amount of type were delivered and end cuttings from trade printers' waste bins provided their paper. She noted at the time, "Typesetting slowly makes me analyze each phrase and tighten the style. We dreamt, ate, talked, slept with the press. Instead of using one's energy in a void, against frustrations, in anger against publishers, I use it on the press, type, paper. At the end of the day you can see your work, weigh it. It is done, it exists." She tried to interest other poets in forming a communal press but for all the enthusiasm and encouragement surrounding the operation none offered to work. The poet Robert Duncan "did not seem interested in manual labor."

Her account reminds me of our struggles in the early days at the Auerhahn Press in San Francisco. I joined Dave Haselwood, in what had been a cobbler shop, to learn between us by trial and error the printing of books. We were fledgling publishers of the new American poetry in the early 60s. Several of the books issued by our press have come to be regarded as central expressions of that lively period and the poets have become well-known. The first book I set and printed was one of Charles Olson's *Maximus Poems*. John Wieners, Phillip Whalen, Michael McClure, William Burroughs along with Allen Ginsberg were members of the "Beat Generation" who revolted against the literary establishment and now find themselves quite well established in a new hierarchy. Auerhahn books had an underground reputation for the merit of the writing and their attractive formats. Our bohemian customers could not pay for the endless hours of hand composition and we were eager to disperse our editions, so the prices of the books and pamphlets were kept lower

than was feasible to sustain a publishing business. But we ended amicably with the satisfaction of having accomplished a necessary literary and artistic function.

These small presses share a refreshing amateurish approach to their subject, one which lends itself to a variety of treatment typographically. The flamboyance of these very private enterprises disregards financial considerations and though their proprietors would abhor the label hobby, they were not meant for material gain or survival, nor do they demand full-time labor of the poets. Horace Walpole exemplifies the unselfish vanity of the private press. His, known as the Strawberry Hill, existed from 1757 to 1789. It was christened with some odes by Thomas Gray and subsequently printed much of Walpole's minor writings. Thomas Bentley's compliment, "Verses to the Printing Press at Strawberry Hill" was duly printed in 28 lines on a quarto sheet as one of its first acts of generosity.

A few poets have been professionally engaged as printers. Walt Whitman earned his living on occasion as a journeyman. He was apprenticed before his fourteenth year. Writers of the time over-punctuated and Walt never unlearned the house-style. But he did acquire the "feel" for words, sentences, paragraphs, as he learned the alphabet of the case. In 1838, nineteen years old, he started his own weekly newspaper, the *Long Islanders*. He later recalled, "I went to New York, bought a press and types, hired some little help, but did most of the work myself, including presswork." The responsibility for the support of his family fell to Whitman in 1845. A printing shop with bookstore attached was one of his successful business ventures as provider and he was well on his way to becoming a solid citizen when the ambition of the poet turned his head. This change of life was carefully considered. Several poems had been published in newspapers and he had received encouragement, but only after years of experimentation with his new poetic medium, did he feel ready to release *Leaves of Grass*. Unable to find a regular publisher for his manuscript, Whitman employed some friends known as the Rome brothers to print the book and had another firm bind the sheets. Myth has it that Whitman set the type with his own hands. Probably he did set a few pages. He once estimated he corrected about ten. The book was offered for sale in July of 1855 by a firm of phrenologists who had examined the poet's cranium and de-

clared him a genius. It was a thin quarto of 95 pages, bound in green cloth ornately stamped with floral designs in gold, the lettering of the title sprouted roots, leaves and tentacles. The name of the author appeared in the copyright but not on the title-page. He preferred to let the frontispiece represent him. It was an engraved photograph of himself in bohemian attire, nonchalantly posed with one hand in the pocket of his jeans. However, he did use his name in "Song of Myself": "Walt Whitman, an American, one of the roughs, a kosmos." Dozens of the 800-copy edition were sent out for review. To one of these Emerson replied, "I greet you at the beginning of a great career." The young Boston firm of Thayer and Eldridge undertook to publish a new edition in 1860. Here again Whitman's influence as a printer can be seen. This book was a small thick 8vo of 546 pages. Symbolic designs graced the cover: a globe swimming in space on the front, a sun half-risen or set out of ocean on the back, and a butterfly on an extended finger on the spine. The spirit of the poet must have had a hand in the final resolution of type, paper and woodcut illustrations at the Grabhorn Press for its monumental edition of *Leaves of Grass* in 1931. Whitman the printer would be proud of that book, the best product of a fine press in America.

Printing was the last craft practiced by William Morris. After the wallpaper, chintzes, stained glass windows, tapestries, tiles, rugs and furniture came the Kelmscott Press. His major writings were also complete when he entered the printing period of his life, its grand finale. The second book of the press, in 1891, was his own *Poems by the Way*, an octavo volume, modest in size and treatment by comparison to the elaborate folios identified with Kelmscott. Morris did however adorn his favorite poem in a magnificent edition. A lyric version of the *Volsung Saga* was begun in 1875 after his translation of the saga with the Old Norse scholar Magnusson. May Morris has said that *Sigurd* was the central poem in her father's life, the work he desired to be his monument. The setting he gave it at the Kelmscott Press was on the scale of his Chaucer, illustrated as well by Burne-Jones.

The poet William Everson used his vocation of printer as a discipline for the contemplative life. During World War II in a Conscientious Objector camp, Everson became involved with printing his own poems and the work of a group of artists and writers incarcerated there. Afterwards, the handpress absorbed him and his books



of poems exhibit a growing sense of quality. This progress led to his masterwork, the *Psalter*. Everson converted to Catholicism in 1949. As a Dominican, Brother Antoninus worked painstakingly in the monastery to attain the finest presswork possible on the *Novum Psalterium*, a new translation of the *Psalms*. This project, a crown folio which would have been 300 pages in length, was never completed, but was bound as a fragment and today commands a high price on the rare book market and the esteem of his fellow printers. A pair of pages are framed at the head of the stairs in our press room as an example to be kept in mind for the dignity of simplicity, the beauty of good type and paper, and as a lesson that obsession with technique will not guarantee perfection of the object, which is, after all, the whole book. Now that Brother Antoninus has left the Order, remarried and is once again known as William Everson we might hope he will also return to the handpress.

The highest achievement of a poet as printer was that of William Blake. The great art of this solitary genius was inimitable and inseparable from his poetry. In the manner of the fifteenth century block book, Blake drew and engraved text and illustrations for his illuminated volumes. The individualism of the medieval scribe combined with the advantages of mechanical reproduction to produce an unique effect, whose technical mystery has not yet been entirely solved. The details of the method of printing from etched copperplates was claimed to have been revealed to Blake in a vision by the spirit of his brother Robert, who had died at age nineteen in 1787. In 1793 he issued a prospectus of six of his "Illuminated Books printed in Colours" advising that he had "invented a method of printing both Letter-press and Engraving in a style more ornamental, uniform, and grand than any before discovered, while it produces works at less than one-quarter the expense. If a method of printing which combines the Printer and the Poet is a Phenomenon worthy of public attention, provided it exceeds in eloquence all former methods, the Author is sure of his reward." He was in error only with regard to the last statement. The books sold poorly, Blake was unappreciated, and his means of livelihood was always precarious. But printing has a democratic nature and that which is unworthy fades into oblivion while the invisible ink of the neglected work can be read under the light of a new day. Since his poems, both lyric and prophetic, were not to the taste of the times, Blake and his wife had to print them

with their own hands. His apprenticeship as an engraver had served him for a living, now he put his training to the use of his art. The plates were etched in relief so that he printed from a raised surface, the coloring sometimes done by hand. A letter to William Hayley in 1800 reads: "My wife's illness not being quite off, she has not printed any more since you went to London. But we can muster a few in colors and some black, which I hope will be no less favor'd, tho' they are rough like rough sailors. We mean to begin printing again tomorrow. Time flies very fast and merrily. I sometimes try to be miserable that I may do more work, but find it is a foolish experiment." The series began in 1789 with his *Songs of Innocence* and culminated in 1818 with *Jerusalem*. In 1820 he turned to the wood block and instead of following the Bewick tradition, initiated his own original use of the white line for form. Some have said Blake's finest illustrative effort was the *Book of Job*, engraved in 1825 from the boundless realm of his marvelous imagination.

This rambling survey of poets as printers has shown the variety of their associations with the printing press. I find in each some of my own reasons for the choice. Initially I had only intended to spend six months learning how a book is made. Before the time was up the Black Art had me in the clutches of her craft. Necessary as it was to find a means of supporting the hungry poet, I fastened on printing for survival. It allowed me the exercise of my talents toward the graphic, was physical, worldly, in counterdistinction to the ethereal pursuits of the poet, and self-employment granted the independence so imperative to poetic freedom. Too many of my contemporaries had allied themselves unhappily with the academic community or were forced sporadically to take hateful jobs or begged and belly-ached from a perpetual state of unemployment. The professions of William Carlos Williams and Wallace Stevens seemed healthier solutions to the problem. We printed my first book, *The Wake*, at the Auerhahn Press, in 1963. In succeeding years my former partner, Dave Haselwood, published two pamphlets of my work which were cooperatively printed at my press. Recently a collection of my poems, *Articles*, was published simultaneously in England and America by reputable houses and I was only too happy to relinquish the printing of these larger editions. A year's part-time employment at the Grabhorn Press came at a time when I was prepared to learn a great deal from those two masters, the brothers Edwin and Robert

Grabhorn. In 1966 Robert and I formed the partnership of the present firm, Grabhorn-Hoyem. We design and print books on commission and publish two or three limited editions per year. Often the subject is poetry. A medieval scholar and I translated the *Pearl* and this was issued with the Middle-English text printed interlinearly from handset type in two colors on mould-made paper. Color transparencies of the original illustrations from the only surviving manuscript of the poem were obtained from the British Museum and these were reproduced by our linoleum block process. Currently we are at work on a deluxe edition of Allen Ginsberg's *Howl*.

The poet continues to print poetry and once in a while he also composes a poem about printing. I stand guilty of the following limerick:

*There was an old printer from Parma,  
Bodoni, the bookie's Bodhi Dharma.  
Through thick and through thin,  
Splitting hairs from his chin,  
He fulfilled his typographical Karma.*



#### BOOK CLUB AUCTION

The book auction held at the Club rooms on October 18th this year was a resounding success. Some fifty or sixty members were present who bid enthusiastically for the 160 items offered. A good many lots were knocked down to out-of-town buyers who sent in their bids by mail. The estimate was that the collection, which was a heterogeneous one, would bring from \$2,900.00 to \$3,500.00. The grand total was \$4,458.50. The directors of the Club are indeed grateful to the members for the generous way in which they responded to the call for books which made the sale possible.

An insert giving the prices realized is included with this issue.



## Clarkson Crane

The death on June 30, 1971 of Clarkson Crane closed the career of this distinguished novelist and short story writer, who in the early 1920s served for a time as Secretary of our Club. A native of Chicago, where he was born in 1894, he lived most of his adult life in California, mainly at San Francisco, Berkeley, and Carmel. These three places were the locale of many of his short stories and of his three novels. Perhaps the best known and most widely acclaimed of the latter is *The Western Shore* (1925), an ironic and meticulously observed treatment of student life at Berkeley, which is as fresh and real and entertaining today as when it first appeared nearly a half century ago. For several years in the late 1920s Clarkson Crane lectured at the University of California Extension Division; he was the Book Club's Secretary from June 1922 to August 1923.

O. L.

## ELECTED TO MEMBERSHIP

*The following have been elected since the publication of the Fall News-Letter:*

<i>Member</i>	<i>Address</i>	<i>Sponsor</i>
Alameda County Library	Hayward	Membership Committee
James W. Baughman	Covina	Doyce B. Nunis, Jr.
June E. Bayless	Santa Monica	G. J. Houle
Paul E. Birkel	San Francisco	Mervyn Eidenmuller
T. E. Calleton	Pasadena	Mark Hanrahan
Corey Hooper Chapman	Petaluma	Lester Roberts
Dwight S. Cushman	Cecilville	Glen Dawson
Edward J. Farrell	Sacramento	Membership Committee
Chris J. Hamilton	Point Loma	Thomas F. Andrews
Louis Laub	Berkeley	Sanford Berger
Thomas W. Leonhardt	Albany	William F. Staggs
Pius XII Memorial Library	St. Louis, Mo.	Washington University Libraries
Malcolm Reynolds	Imola	Donovan J. McCune
Thomas B. Shaw	Berkeley	John Swingle
Mr. & Mrs. Bradford Walker	San Francisco	Richard Frank
Prof. Seth L. Wolitz	New York, N.Y.	William F. Staggs
James A. Zenner	San Francisco	David Belch

*The two classifications of membership above Regular Membership are Patron Memberships, \$100 a year, and Sustaining Memberships \$35 a year. The following entered the Club as a Patron member:*

Brayton Wilbur, Jr.	San Francisco	Joseph M. Bransten
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*The following have changed from Regular to Sustaining Membership:*

Franklin Gilliam	San Francisco
Louis J. Knobbe	Orange

*Changes of address:*

It would be greatly appreciated if members would notify us promptly when mailing addresses are changed. Lately we have been faced with extra expense for material returned by the Post Office (only first class mail is forwarded). We then re-mail to the new address. **WARNING:** In the future we cannot re-mail any announcements, etcetera, etcetera.

1941 - 1971

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# THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA

## Book Auction Prices

October 18, 1971

1	20.00	41	155.00	81	77.50	121	15.00
2	15.00	42	22.50	82	10.00	122	47.50
3	12.50	43	21.00	83	52.50	123	18.00
4	85.00	44	17.50	84	12.00	124	15.00
5	10.00	45	25.00	85	32.00	125	3.00
6	70.00	46	11.00	86	15.50	126	15.00
7	85.00	47	25.00	87	45.00	127	25.00
8	10.00	48	22.50	88	40.00	128	8.50
9	27.50	49	11.00	89	41.00	129	8.00
10	20.00	50	70.00	90	23.00	130	32.00
11	80.00	51	21.00	91	38.00	131	8.00
12	10.00	52	16.00	92	40.00	132	8.50
13	30.00	53	25.00	93	12.00	133	21.00
14	13.00	54	5.00	94	40.00	134	37.50
15	21.00	55	6.00	95	16.00	135	12.00
16	8.00	56	11.00	96	2.00	136	8.50
17	5.00	57	25.00	97	10.50	137	15.00
18	30.00	58	25.00	98	7.50	138	5.00
19	17.50	59	11.00	99	45.00	139	115.00
20	25.00	60	11.00	100	16.00	140	8.00
21	20.00	61	52.50	101	76.00	141	13.00
22	40.00	62	22.00	102	290.00	142	13.00
23	20.00	63	15.00	103	30.00	143	5.00
24	11.00	64	8.00	104	25.00	144	8.50
25	10.00	65	12.50	105	27.50	145	17.50
26	10.00	66	30.00	106	18.50	146	5.00
27	11.00	67	8.50	107	12.50	147	7.50
28	17.00	68	70.00	108	21.00	148	35.00
29	8.00	69	15.50	109	46.00	149	35.00
30	35.00	70	32.50	110	40.00	150	7.50
31	42.50	71	15.00	111	25.00	151	47.50
32	9.50	72	6.50	112	7.00	152	37.50
33	40.00	73	7.50	113	62.50	153	30.00
34	15.00	74	5.00	114	1.50	154	24.00
35	30.00	75	21.00	115	125.00	155	38.00
36	25.00	76	17.50	116	7.50	156	47.50
37	35.00	77	50.00	117	30.00	157	65.00
38	40.00	78	61.00	118	5.00	158	20.00
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